

**In the specification:**

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 22 to read as follows:

As noted hereinbefore, because a golfer's swing tends to vary more in the heel-toe direction than it does up or down, the inventor of the present invention determined that the most efficient reinforcement would be an elliptical thickened region oriented so that the major axis of the reinforced region was substantially horizontal when the club is held in its normal position for addressing the ball. Accordingly, face plate 22 includes a central thickened region 24 that is substantially elliptical in shape with its major axis 26 oriented horizontal when the club is held in its normal address position. In the illustrative embodiment, central thickened region 24 is between 0.130 and 0.180 inches in thickness. Central thickened region 24 is surrounded by a transition region 28 that tapers from the central thickened region 24 to a peripheral region 30, which in the illustrative embodiment is 0.080 to 0.120 inches thick. Transition region 28 is also elliptical, however, for reasons that are explained more fully hereinafter, the major axis and minor axis of transition region 28 are a fixed amount larger than the respective major and minor axis of central thickened region 24. Accordingly, the aspect ratio of transition region 28 is lower than the aspect ratio of central thickened region 24 (in other words, transition region 28 is a "fatter" ellipse than central thickened region 24). As used herein, the "aspect ratio" of an elliptical region is defined to mean the major axis of the ellipse divided by the minor axis of the ellipse.